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RESEARCH PROPOSAL

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN, ART AND TECHNOLOGY (CEDAT)

MARGARET TROWELL SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL AND FINE ART (MTSIFA)

THE IMPACT OF COLONIALISM ON CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART FORM IN UGANDA

A CASE STUDY FROM BUGANDA KINGDOM CULTURE THE USE OF BANANA FIBRES TO MAKE CRAFTS SPECIFICALLY DOLLS.

BY

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DECLARATION

I NYANGO RONALD POLYCARP, declare that this research proposal is my original work, conducted by me and has never been submitted to any University for any academic award.

SIGNATURE .....

DATE.....

APPROVAL

This research proposal has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

SIGNATURE……..

DATE……

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DEDICATION

This work is lovingly dedicated to my father, Boyi Nyango Polycarp, whose guidance and resilience have always inspired me; to my mother, Naggayi Christine, for her unwavering love, prayers, and support; and to myself, for the perseverance, discipline, and belief that have carried me through every step of this journey.

May this be a reflection of your sacrifice and a foundation for greater things ahead.

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First and foremost, I thank the Almighty God for the gift of life, strength, and wisdom that have sustained me throughout this academic journey. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback that shaped this research proposal into its current form. To my beloved parents, Boyi Nyango Polycarp and Naggayi Christine, thank you for your endless support, prayers, and sacrifices. Your belief in me has been my greatest motivation. I also appreciate my friends, lecturers, and colleagues at Makerere University, Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts, for their inspiration, collaboration, and shared insights that enriched my academic growth.

Lastly, I acknowledge myself or the courage, effort, and consistency invested in this work. This milestone is not the end, but a reflection of progress, growth, and purpose.

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DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

Colonialism: The practice of establishing political control over another territory and its people to extend one's own power and interests.

Traditional Art Forms: Artistic expressions and practices that are deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of a community, often passed down through generations.

Banana Fiber Dolls: Traditional dolls made from banana fibers, often used for pedagogical purposes and cultural expression in Buganda, Uganda.

Buganda Kingdom: A kingdom located in central Uganda, with a rich cultural history and traditional art forms.

Cultural Heritage: The customs, traditions, and artistic expressions that are inherited from past generations and are considered valuable to a community.

Artisan: Skilled craftspeople who create traditional art forms, such as banana fiber dolls.

Eurocentric Lens: A perspective that interprets African art and culture through European values and standards, often marginalizing indigenous practices.

Pedagogical Purposes: The use of art or other means to teach or educate, often used in the context of traditional art forms.

Thematic Analysis: A method of analyzing qualitative data by identifying, coding, and categorizing themes or patterns.

Triangulation: The use of multiple data sources, methods, or researchers to validate findings and increase the reliability of research.

Purposive Sampling: A non-probability sampling method that selects participants based on their relevance to the research question or objective.

In-depth Interview: A qualitative data collection method that involves detailed, open-ended questions to gather personal accounts and experiences.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): A qualitative data collection method that involves group discussions to explore communal perspectives and experiences.

Participant Observation: A qualitative data collection method that involves observing and participating in the daily activities of a community or group to gather data.

Document Review: A qualitative data collection method that involves analyzing existing documents, such as literature, reports, and archival materials, to gather data.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNESCO: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

NGOs: Non-Government Organization.

FGDs: Focused Group Discussions.

MTSIFA: Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Art

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter one contains the introduction, the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of study, objectives of study, research question, justification rationale (reason for the study), significance of the study (importance of the study), scope of the study (geographical scope, content, and time scope) and also the unity of analysis. This research is purposely carried out to examine the transformation of African art forms specifically from Buganda kingdom after colonialism: adoption adaption and loss. Preservation of tradition in Buganda what has survived and what has been changed post-colonialism.

1.1 Background

Colonialism is the practice of establishing political control over another territory and its people to extend one's own power and interests often dressed in the disguise of civilization but rooted in control land ,resources and people and rewrote cultures extracted wealth and replaced cultures with theirs .In another dimension colonialism in Africa was a system foreign powers in the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 held on February 26 to partition Africa under Otto Von Bismarck the first German chancellor at the request Leopold II of Belgium at building (no.77, now no.92) and concluded with the partition of Africa among different European countries . Before colonial contact, Uganda was a home to diverse and deeply rooted traditional art forms that were not only aesthetic but also spiritual attachments, functional and communal purposes and served as a powerful medium of expression used in rituals, storytelling, communication and preservation of history, norms and values art was also integral to identity and societal structures. With

the arrival of colonial powers in the late 19th century, particularly the British Uganda's contemporary art drastically dropped since it was DE campaigned as being primitive satanic hence leading to its suppression creating a gap for western culture to venture into. AS a result, many traditional art forms were diluted, lost and transformed. The Buganda kingdom, located in central boasts a rich cultural heritage and traditional art form that date back centuries. One such art form is the creation of banana fiber dolls, which holds significant symbolic values most especially to the children though being seen as a toy which holds figurative values. Pre-colonialism, these dolls crafted using different traditional techniques and materials, often depicting figures from the Buganda mythology and folklore.

The banana fiber doll traditional is not only a testament of the creativity and skill of Buganda artisans but also plays a vital role in preserving the culture of Buganda identity. However, with advent of colonialism there was a shift of traditional way doing through colonial influence and culture. Buganda kingdom is a kingdom found in Uganda is the largest and oldest located in the country’s central region including the capital city Kampala. It was found around the 13th century by king Kato Kintu and is currently led by king Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II. The kingdom has rich cultural history, a centralized political structure, and made up of over 50 clans, with its own queen (Nabagereka) and prime minister (katikiro).

This research aims to explore the impact of colonialism on traditional Buganda art, specifically the banana fiber doll making traditional, and how it has changed over time.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite of the fact that Uganda has rich and diverse heritage in traditional art forms there has been a significant decline in their practice, preservation and relevance in contemporary society. The colonial system introduced foreign cultural systems, religious indoctrination, hypothesis and doctrines to erode and wipe African brains also Uganda being part also introduced artistic standards which disrupted indigenous artistic expression. Many traditional art forms we devalued labeled uncivilized and, in some cases, deliberately suppressed. Today, there is limited documentation about the appreciation of Uganda's precolonial art forms which need to be addressed to the public especially the youth. Furthermore, scholarly research often overlooks the deep cultural of these art forms such banana fiber dolls particularly in Buganda where colonial influence was at its verge. Therefore, this study aims to address and tackle some of the untouched part particularly Buganda.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study of the study is to explore and analyze the extent to which colonialism influence drove away traditional African craft making to adopt colonial ways to manufactured one particularly Buganda from “dole y’ebyayi” to another form of dolls as a traditional art form. This research aims to uncover the cultural shifts and artistic disruptions brought by colonial rule and how these changes affected the production, perception and preservation of indigenous art.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective is to examine the impact of colonialism on traditional art forms in Uganda, with the specific focus on banana fiber dolls in Buganda.

- To trace the historical origins and cultural significance of banana fiber dolls in Buganda before colonial influence.
- To analyze how colonialism affected the production, usage and symbolism of banana fiber dolls (Dole).
- To investigate the current role of banana fiber in Ugandan art, education and tourism.
- To document how artisans use banana fiber in making dolls.
- To analyze the use of Natural Materials in Ugandan Craft.
- To investigate colonial influence on indigenous Art.

1.5 Research Questions.

1. What role can documentation, education and cultural institutions play in preserving and promoting traditional Buganda art forms?
2. How did colonialism impact the traditional banana fiber doll making techniques and practices in the Buganda kingdom?
3. What strategies can be employed to preserve and promote traditional Buganda art forms, including banana fiber doll-making, in the face of globalization and cultural exchange?

1.6 Justification /Rationale (Reason of the Research).

This research is important because it seeks to uncover how colonialism disrupted, reshaped and diminished traditional art forms in Uganda particularly Buganda region .Traditional art in Africa was only a form of expression but a key vehicle for preserving history ,spirituality ,value, norms and identity .During colonial rule many indigenous were erased and replaced to fit and suit western tastes ,religious agendas and political control the British in Uganda .Understanding this history is crucial and vital for cultural preservation ,informing art education and inspiring the younger generation to reconnect with the pass and also embrace

it .It also add a brick to the colonization of African art history and heritage also fuel in challenging the dominance of western narratives in creative spaces and fields such art schools such as Margaret Trowel school of Industrial and fine art at Makerere University.

1.7 Significance of the Study.

- Cultural preservation, it helps in documenting and preserving traditional Buganda art forms particularly banana fiber dolls by bringing them back to light to highlight their cultural relevance before and after colonialism.
- Understanding colonial impact; this research helps us to understand how colonial legacy altered indigenous African art.
- Promotion of indigenous art by show casing the resilience and evolution of banana fiber.
- Education value, the findings will serve as a valuable resource for art history to universities.

1.8 Scope of the Study.

This study focuses on examining the impact of colonialism on traditionalism on traditional art forms in Uganda with a specific emphasis on the Buganda region .The research will cover the period from the late 19th century when British colonial influence intensified in Uganda up the post-independence era .It explores the traditional importance of banana fiber dolls .The research will also examine how colonial policies ,missionary activities and western education system influenced ,replaced and suppressed indigenous artistic expressions .

1. Geographical scope.

Geographically, the research is limited and rotates in central Uganda (Buganda), but the research findings may provide insights applicable to other regions.

2. Time scope

- The study will focus on the period between 1894 and the present day.
- Pre- colonial era (before 1894) to understand traditional art in indigenous context.
- Post-independence period (present) to access how colonial legacies continue to influence traditional art in Uganda and efforts towards revival.

3. Content scope.

The research will explore the traditional art forms in Buganda, colonial interference such as education governance, cultural shift change of purpose and commercialization traditional art. Preservation and evolution of art and also gaps in research.

1.9 Unity of Analysis.

The unity of analysis for the study will focus on the study of traditional art forms of Buganda specifically the banana fiber dolls as a practiced and preserved in the Buganda region of Uganda.

- Individual artisans, techniques, motivation and experience in creation.
- Banana fiber dolls themselves as cultural artifact focusing on their form, symbolism, function and evolution.

- Cultural institutions and community practices such as museums, craft markets schools and homes where these dolls are taught, sold and used.
- Historical and colonial influences examining how colonialism affected the practice.
- Transmission of knowledge from one generation to another of doll making.

The unit of analysis allows the study to explore both tangible(artifacts) and intangible cultural knowledge.

4.10. Limitation of the study.

This study the impact of colonialism on traditional art forms, focusing on banana fiber doll making may have the following limitation.

1. Geographical scope; the study might be limited to a specific region or community within the Buganda kingdom, potentially limiting other areas.
2. Timeframe; the study's focus on historical impact might be limited by records.
3. Language barrier; the research might be limited to language limitation.
4. Cultural sensitivity; the researcher might not be familiar with the Buganda culture
5. Access to participants; limited access to Buganda artisans.
6. Archival limitations; access to historical records might be few hence affecting the depth of research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.

2.0 Introduction

The literature review will explore the depth ,examine the ways in which colonialism shaped African artists to the changes .By analyzing the impact of colonialism on the Buganda kingdom's banana fiber doll making tradition, this study aims to contribute to the deeper understanding of complex dynamics of cultural exchange and resistance in African art .The impact of colonialism on African art forms, particularly in the Buganda kingdom has been profound and far-reaching .Colonialism disrupted traditional art forms, imposing European artistic standards and values that often marginalized indigenous practices. The Buganda kingdom's traditional banana fiber doll making was shaken by colonial influence percolated local art forms.

2.1. Historical origins and cultural significance of banana fiber dolls in Buganda before colonial influence.

The historical origin of banana fiber dolls in Buganda is not clear to many historians however there in reference to other studies of the world dolls have been in existence for a long period of time according to journal article the Doll Harris (Dec., 1920) explores the cultural evolution of dolls, tracing their transformation from sacred symbols to childhood toys. She emphasizes how dolls reflect societal values and human psychology. Muriel Harris's essay, published in The North American Review in December 1920, offers a thoughtful and historically rich examination of dolls not merely as playthings, but as cultural artifacts that mirror human civilization. She begins by distinguishing dolls from religious idols, noting that while both may share physical similarities, their purposes diverge:

“The religious element does not come in here, or when it does, the doll ceases to be a doll proper”.

Harris traces the doll’s lineage back to ancient times, highlighting how early societies crafted figures that resembled humans. These were often used in rituals or as symbolic representations of fertility, protection, or spiritual connection. Over time, however, dolls shed their sacred roles and entered the domestic sphere, becoming companions for children. This shift, Harris argues, reflects broader changes in societal attitudes toward childhood and play. She also discusses the materials and craftsmanship of dolls through the ages. From primitive clay and wood figures to elaborately dressed porcelain dolls of the Victorian era, Harris illustrates how technological advances and aesthetic preferences shaped doll-making. The increasing realism of dolls, she notes, parallels a growing desire to replicate human features and behaviors suggesting a psychological need to nurture, control, or understand the self through imitation.

Importantly, Harris views dolls as mirrors of gender roles and domestic expectations. She critiques how dolls often reinforce traditional femininity, especially in the way girls are encouraged to care for baby dolls, mimicking maternal behavior. This, she suggests, subtly prepares them for adult roles in a patriarchal society. Yet she also acknowledges the imaginative freedom dolls can offer, allowing children to project stories, emotions, and identities onto them. Throughout the article, Harris’s tone is both analytical and poetic. She treats dolls not as trivial objects but as vessels of meaning, capable of revealing the values, anxieties, and aspirations of the cultures that produce them. Her essay invites readers to reconsider the doll’s place in history not just as a toy, but as a symbol of human creativity and complexity. Dolls are believed to have been in existence for over 4000 years be at least four thousand years and the perfection of Egyptian dolls of that

period makes it certain that her ancestry is considerably more remote than this.

Yet remains unchanged and unchanging, throughout history, nursing our delusions, giving us away without scruple, a silent witness to our emotions and our needs, to the futility of all our efforts to present ourselves as other than we are, to the devastating truth that there is no real dividing line between mortals and immortals. In Uganda in Buganda kingdom dolls were significantly used for mainly pedagogical purposes.

2.2. Traditional African Art and Cultural Identity.

Scholars such as Cole (1989) and Abiodun (1994) argue that African art is deeply interwoven with community, rituals, and daily life. Ideals and Power in the Art of Africa (1989), Cole explores how traditional African art functions not merely as aesthetic expression but as a dynamic force in shaping and sustaining cultural identity. Cole introduces the concept of “icons “recurring visual themes such as the couple, the woman and child, the armed male, the rider, and the stranger that have appeared across African art for over six thousand years. These icons, according to Cole, are not arbitrary motifs but deeply embedded symbols that reflect the core values and social ideals of African communities.

Cole’s central argument is that African art is inherently tied to communal life and cultural continuity. Unlike Western notions of art as individualistic or purely decorative, traditional African art is integrally linked to ritual, politics, religion, and social hierarchy. For example, sculptures of rulers or ancestors are not just representations they are imbued with spiritual power and serve as conduits for communication with the divine or the deceased. Artworks are often created for specific functions: to honor ancestors, to mark rites of passage, or to assert political authority.

In this way, art becomes a living part of the cultural fabric, reinforcing identity through shared symbols and practices.

The five icons Cole identifies are especially significant because they transcend regional and ethnic boundaries, appearing in various forms across the continent. The couple, for instance, symbolizes harmony, fertility, and social balance. The woman and child icon emphasizes nurturing and continuity, while the armed male represents protection and authority. The rider often signifies prestige and mobility, and the stranger reflects themes of otherness and transformation. These icons are not static they evolve in response to changing social and political contexts, yet they retain their symbolic potency.

Cole also emphasizes the diversity within African art traditions. While the icons provide a unifying framework, their interpretation and execution vary widely depending on local customs, materials, and historical circumstances. This diversity underscores the richness of African cultural identity, which is both deeply rooted and dynamically adaptive.

Importantly, Cole challenges the Western tendency to view African art through a colonial or ethnographic lens. He advocates for understanding African art on its own terms, recognizing its intellectual and philosophical depth. By doing so, he elevates African art from mere artifact to a sophisticated medium of cultural expression. In his influential work, particularly the essay “Seeking the African in African Art,” Abiodun challenges Western-centric interpretations of African art by asserting that traditional African art cannot be fully understood without engaging with the cultural and linguistic frameworks from which it originates. His 1994 argument centers on the Yoruba artistic tradition, using it as a lens to critique broader misconceptions about African art. Abiodun contends that Western art history often isolates African art from its functional, spiritual, and linguistic contexts, reducing it to mere aesthetic objects. This approach, he argues, strips African art of its

cultural essence and misrepresents its purpose and meaning. For example, Yoruba art is deeply embedded in the concept of oriki a form of praise poetry that combines verbal and visual elements to convey identity, lineage, and spiritual significance. Without understanding oriki and its role in Yoruba society, one cannot grasp the full meaning of Yoruba sculpture, textiles, or performance art.

He further emphasizes that African art is not created for art's sake, but serves specific cultural functions ritual, political, social, and spiritual. Masks, for instance, are not just decorative objects but are activated through dance, music, and ritual, embodying ancestral spirits or deities. Abiodun argues that such art must be studied in its performative and communal context, not as static museum pieces.

A key part of Abiodun's 1994 argument is the call for African scholars and artists to reclaim the interpretation of their own cultural heritage. He advocates for methodologies that prioritize indigenous knowledge systems, oral traditions, and linguistic nuances. This includes using African languages to analyze African art, as language carries cultural metaphors, idioms, and philosophical concepts that are often lost in translation. Abiodun's critique also extends to the colonial legacy in art history, which often categorized African art as "primitive" or "tribal." He dismantles these labels by demonstrating the complexity, intentionality, and philosophical depth of African artistic traditions. In doing so, he repositions African art as a sophisticated cultural expression that deserves scholarly respect and contextual understanding.

In Buganda, crafts such as bark cloth, weaving, and mat-making have received attention, but dolls especially those made from banana fiber are rarely analyzed beyond their role in play or tourism. Yet, these dolls carry deep cultural codes that reflect

gender roles, socialization, and storytelling traditiotion. Scholars also argues from anthropology art history citation highlight a major shift from African art from ethnographic studies of ritual t art in the 1970s to contemporary African art creativity.

2.3. Use of Natural Materials in Ugandan Craft and preservation.

In recent years, there has been resurgence in valuing indigenous crafts in Uganda, promoted by NGOs such as UNESCO and cultural institutions. Initiatives like the Uganda Crafts 2000 Ltd Kampala, Uganda and the Nommo Gallery found and established in 1964 by the 1959 act parliament, which is a Uganda's national art gallery and components of the Uganda national cultural center have showcased banana fiber art, though often focusing on baskets and decor rather than dolls. This gap presents a strong case for in-depth study of banana fiber dolls as cultural artifacts. While existing literature acknowledges the cultural and material value of Ugandan crafts, banana fiber dolls remain under-documented and under-theorized. In Most references are anecdotal or treated within broader themes of craft or tourism. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by documenting, analyzing, and preserving the artistic, cultural, and social relevance of banana fiber dolls in Buganda. Studies on Ugandan material culture. Kyeyune, (2003), Mwanja, Christine Kalembe (2023) emphasizes the innovative use of natural resources like banana fibers, bamboo, reeds, and bark cloth in sustainable art. In his 2003 work, Kyeyune explores how indigenous materials particularly banana fibers can be repurposed into sustainable art forms that challenge conventional practices while celebrating local heritage. His argument is rooted in the belief that art should not only serve aesthetic and expressive purposes but also respond to pressing environmental concerns. By turning to banana fibers, which are abundant agricultural by-products in Uganda and other tropical regions, Kalembe highlights

a resource that is both biodegradable and culturally resonant. Banana fibers, extracted from the pseudo stem of the banana plant, possess qualities that make them ideal for artistic experimentation: they are strong, flexible, and have a natural texture that lends itself to both two-dimensional and sculptural applications. Kalembe emphasizes that using such materials allows artists to reduce reliance on synthetic or imported supplies, which are often costly and environmentally damaging. Instead, banana fibers offer a sustainable alternative that aligns with the principles of eco-art art that is created with ecological awareness and often aims to inspire environmental action.

Mwanja situates this practice within a broader socio-cultural framework. He argues that incorporating banana fibers into art is not merely a technical innovation but a reclamation of indigenous knowledge systems. Traditional Ugandan crafts have long utilized plant-based materials, and by reviving these methods in contemporary art, creators can forge a dialogue between past and present. This approach also empowers local communities by validating their resources and skills, fostering economic opportunities through the production of eco-friendly art and textiles.

Kyeyune’s argument also touches on the symbolic potency of banana fibers. In many African cultures, the banana plant is associated with fertility, sustenance, and continuity. By embedding these fibers into artworks, artists can evoke narratives of resilience and regeneration concepts that resonate deeply in postcolonial contexts where cultural identity and environmental degradation intersect. Sustainable art, in this view, becomes a medium for storytelling and healing, as well as ecological advocacy.

Importantly, Kyeyune does not romanticize the use of natural materials. He acknowledges the technical challenges involved in processing banana fibers for artistic use, such as ensuring durability and achieving desired aesthetic effects. However, he

sees these challenges as opportunities for innovation, urging artists to experiment and collaborate across disciplines combining art, agriculture, and science to develop new techniques and applications. Banana fiber, in particular, is praised for its strength, availability, and eco-friendliness. However, the artistic transformation of banana fibers into dolls often created by women and children remains an understudied subject.

2.4. The current role of banana fiber in Ugandan art, education.

According to Tamusuza (2005) and Beigi (2022) traditional art forms in Buganda are closely linked to gendered knowledge. Dolls are not only toys but tools for teaching girls' caregiving, modesty, and social roles. Banana fiber dolls therefore serve as both pedagogical and aesthetic tools, worthy of academic focus. The cultural narratives, songs, or folk stories associated with the dolls are rarely captured, yet they are central to their meaning and function in traditional contexts. Though mentioned briefly, there's insufficient exploration of gender dynamics how these dolls relate to the roles, expectations, and identities of women and girls in Buganda society. According to Beigi (2022) argues in a small-scale study made by a student educator on an early childhood studies degree, student educator tells stories through these dolls and helps nurturing creativity in their lived experiences. Beigi how traditional art forms in Buganda are deeply intertwined with gendered knowledge systems, using examples like doll-making to illustrate how cultural practices encode and transmit gender roles. In her 2022 study, Beigi investigates the intersection of traditional Buganda art and gendered epistemologies, revealing how artistic practices serve as vehicles for social instruction and identity formation. One compelling example she discusses is the use of dolls not merely as children's toys, but as pedagogical tools that reflect

and reinforce gender norms within Ganda society. Dolls in Buganda culture are symbolic artifacts that embody expectations of femininity and domesticity. Young girls are often given dolls to play with, but this play is not neutral it is a form of socialization. Through doll play, girls rehearse caregiving roles, household management, and maternal responsibilities. Beigi argues that this practice is a form of embodied knowledge transmission, where art becomes a medium through which gendered behavior is taught and internalized.

Moreover, Beigi highlights how the making of traditional art such as bark cloth, pottery, and beadwork is often gendered in terms of who creates it and how it is used. For instance, bark cloth production, historically dominated by men, is associated with ritual and political authority, while beadwork and textile embellishment, often undertaken by women, are linked to beauty, marriage, and social status. These divisions are not arbitrary; they reflect deeper cultural logics about gender roles and power.

The concept of “doll arguments” in Beigi’s work refers to the debates and tensions that arise when traditional gender roles are challenged or reinterpreted through art. For example, contemporary artists in Buganda may repurpose doll imagery to critique patriarchal norms or to celebrate alternative expressions of gender. This recontextualization of traditional symbols opens up space for dialogue and transformation, showing how art can both preserve and disrupt cultural narratives.

Beigi’s analysis also touches on the role of art in intergenerational knowledge transfer, especially among women. Artistic practices are often taught informally within families, passed down from mothers to daughters. This transmission is not just technical it carries moral and social values, shaping how individuals understand their place within the community.

2.5. Colonial Influence on Indigenous Art.

Colonial narratives often dismissed indigenous crafts as primitive. This led to the marginalization or transformation of traditional arts Kasfir (1999). The commercialization of banana fiber dolls for tourists has altered their original meanings, raising questions about authenticity, appropriation, and cultural preservation. The colonial encounter between European powers and African societies profoundly reshaped the trajectory of indigenous African art. Colonialism disrupted traditional artistic practices, imposed new aesthetic values, and redefined the role of art within African communities. One of the most significant impacts of colonialism was the suppression and devaluation of indigenous artistic traditions. European colonizers often dismissed African art as primitive or fetishistic, failing to recognize its cultural, spiritual, and social significance. This Eurocentric lens led to the marginalization of traditional art forms and the imposition of Western artistic standards. Missionaries and colonial administrators discouraged or outright banned certain practices, particularly those associated with indigenous religions, such as masks and ritual sculptures.

Simultaneously, colonialism introduced new materials, techniques, and markets. African artists began to engage with Western media such as oil painting, printmaking, and sculpture in stone and bronze. This exposure led to the emergence of hybrid art forms that blended traditional African motifs with European styles. Artists like Ben Enwonwu and Gerard Sekoto exemplified this synthesis, using Western techniques to express African themes and identities.

Colonial institutions also played a dual role in shaping African art. On one hand, colonial museums and ethnographic collections appropriated vast quantities of African art, often through coercion or theft. These artifacts were displayed in European institutions, stripped of their original context and reinterpreted through colonial narratives. On the other hand, colonial art schools and

patronage systems provided African artists with new platforms for training and exposure, albeit within a framework that often-prioritized European tastes and ideologies.

The colonial experience also catalyzed a political and cultural awakening among African artists. Art became a medium of resistance and self-definition. In the mid-20th century, as nationalist movements gained momentum, artists used their work to reclaim African heritage and assert cultural sovereignty. This period saw a revival of interest in indigenous aesthetics, not as relics of the past but as sources of modern identity and pride. The decolonization of African art was both a political and artistic project, challenging the legacy of colonial domination and reasserting the value of African worldviews.

Butler, Richard Dyer, and Mikhail Bakhtin. They assert that ‘race’ constitutes a set of variable and ever-changing codes employed to describe human minds and bodies, often with the end of asserting the superiority of one group over another. While discourses of ‘race’ constitute an ever-shifting and mutable set of codes, they simultaneously create the illusion of facticity. The literature does not fully explore how banana fiber dolls have evolved due to tourism, commercialization, or education. There’s a gap in understanding their modern relevance, especially in urban settings or among younger generations. There's a lack of comparative research between banana fiber dolls in Buganda and similar traditional dolls in other African or global cultures using local plant materials.

While general crafts and banana fiber usage in Uganda have been documented, banana fiber dolls specifically have not been studied in detail. Most literature bundles them under general handicrafts or children's toys without deep cultural or artistic analysis.

2.6. How artisans use banana fiber in making dolls.

There is little to no ethnographic research on how banana fiber dolls are made, who makes them, and what stories or meanings are embedded in their creation. The voices of the local artists, especially women and children involved in doll-making, are absent in current literature. No studies offer a formal artistic critique or stylistic breakdown of these dolls (e.g., form, color, symbolism). In Buganda, a region in central Uganda, banana fiber dolls are a traditional craft rooted in the everyday lives of local communities. Bananas are a staple crop in Uganda, and the fiber from banana plants especially the dried outer layers of the trunk is readily available. The process begins with children or artisans collecting banana fibers from nearby plantations. These fibers are stripped from the banana stem, cleaned, and dried naturally. The doll-making process is simple and intuitive. Artisans twist and bind the fibers by hand to form the doll's body, limbs, and head. The dolls are often dressed using scraps of cloth or additional plant materials. This craft is commonly taught in schools or community workshops, serving both as a creative outlet and a way to preserve cultural heritage. The dolls are typically made without the use of adhesives or synthetic materials, emphasizing sustainability and accessibility. Each doll is unique, reflecting the maker's creativity and the natural variations in the fiber.

Art historical methods have not been applied to study banana fiber dolls as a visual art form however there is some related literature of some scholars who have stood out to argue about it that dolls are made to represent visual representation of people for example the Karuna dolls in India. Karuna, a word with Sanskrit and Pali origins, literally means compassion. A word that is deep seated in the Indian ecosystem, with its importance being reflected in one of the primary virtues according to Buddhism. According to Chandra (1956), the concept of soul is the primary foundation of the belief system. It has also been seen even during the Indus valley civilization or the cave paintings of Bhimbetka, that the societies

have identified with forms close to their visual space, including that of human or animal figures. In African setting in Buganda kingdom in Uganda dolls are made in dry banana fibers mostly made by women and girls for visual representation of both male and women mainly for pedagogical purposes such as nurturing.

CH APTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology that will guide the research process. It outlines the research design, population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection methods and instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, and methods of data analysis.

3.0. Research Design.

A research design is the overall strategy and blueprint for a research study, outlining the plan for how you will collect and analyze data to answer a research question or test a hypothesis. It is a logical structure that guides the study by defining the research objectives, methodology, sampling methods, data collection procedures, and analysis techniques to ensure the research is coherent and addresses the problem effectively.

This study will adopt a qualitative research design using a descriptive case study approach reason being this design is suitable for exploring the nuanced effects of colonialism on traditional art practices and for documenting cultural knowledge therefore the research will be fully exploited using this method. For research to be carried out successfully, it requires suitable research design. This is a plan adopted by a researcher before data collection commences so as to achieve the research objective in a valid way. Creswell (2014). A case study allows for an in-depth, contextual analysis of a specific community in this case, the making of banana fiber dolls in Buganda.

3.1. Target Population.

The population of the study will include:

- Traditional artisans (banana fiber doll makers)

- Cultural heritage practitioners (from Buganda Kingdom and National Museums) in Mengo palace.
- Art lecturers and historians
- Local community such as the elders

This population is chosen due to their direct knowledge or lived experience with traditional art forms and the colonial impact on them.

3.2. Sample Size and Sampling Technique.

Using purposive sampling, the study will select a sample of 10 participants, comprising:

- 2 traditional artisans
- 3 cultural heritage officers
- 2 lecturers/art historians
- 3 community elders

Purposive sampling is ideal for selecting individuals who have deep, specific knowledge on the subject Patton (2002). This non-probability sampling method ensures the quality and relevance of data.

3.3. Data Collection Methods.

The study will use qualitative primary data collection methods, specifically:

- In-depth Interviews; This will help in gathering personal accounts, experiences, and perceptions.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); To explore communal perspectives and memory the group discussion held with different groups of people will help in exploration of the making and the uses of dolls.
- Participant Observation; To witness the artistic processes and cultural expressions through visual analysis of the process and crafting.

Secondary data will be gathered through:

- Document review; including archival materials, published literature, museum reports, colonial records, history and oral traditional stories.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments.

The following instruments will be used:

- Interview Guides: Semi-structured questions to provide flexibility while maintaining focus.
- Observation Checklist: To record techniques, materials, and cultural expressions used in banana fiber doll-making.
- Document Review Template: To extract relevant historical and academic information from literature and facts.

3.5. Validity and Reliability.

To ensure validity, tools will be pre-tested with experts in art and heritage studies. Their feedback will inform revisions.

Triangulation will be applied using interviews, observations, and document review to validate findings from multiple perspectives Creswell (2014).

Reliability will be ensured by:

- Using consistent questions across interviews
- Audio recording and transcribing for accuracy
- Maintaining detailed field notes for traceability

3.6. Data Analysis.

Data from interviews and FGDs will be analyzed using thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006). The process includes:

- Familiarization with data
- Coding and categorization
- Theme identification
- Interpretation

Relevant quotes will be used to support findings. Observational data will supplement thematic insights with descriptive detail.

3.7. Ethical Considerations.

The study will uphold ethical standards by:

- Obtaining informed consent
- Ensuring confidentiality
- Respecting cultural sensitivities

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE.

Kvale, S. (2007). Doing Interviews. Sage Publications.
Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2011). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. Sage Publications.

APPENDIX B: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST.

Angrosino, M. V. (2007). Doing Ethnographic Observation. Sage Publications.
Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes. University of Chicago Press.

APPENDIX C: DOCUMENT REVIEW TEMPLATE.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. Qualitative Research Journal, 9(2), 27-40.
Scott, J. (1990). A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research. Polity Press.

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) GUIDE.

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research. Sage Publications.
Morgan, D. L. (1997). Focus Groups as Qualitative Research. Sage Publications.

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM.

American Psychological Association. (2017). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.
World Medical Association. (2013). Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects.

APPENDIX F: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS.

1. Traditional Artisans
   - Banana fiber doll maker, Buganda Kingdom
   - Traditional craftsman, Buganda Kingdom
2. Cultural Heritage Practitioners.
   - Curator, Uganda National Museum
   - Cultural Officer, Buganda Kingdom
   - Heritage Specialist, Mengo Palace
3. Art Lecturers/Historians.
   - Lecturers, Makerere University, Department of Fine Art
   - Art Historian, Uganda Museum
4. Community Elders
   - Community Leader, Buganda Kingdom
   - Traditional Leader, Buganda Kingdom
   - Community Elder, Buganda Kingdom

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY OF TERMS.

Artisan: A skilled craftsman or craftswoman who creates traditional art forms, such as banana fiber dolls.

Banana Fiber Dolls: Traditional dolls made from banana fibers, often used for pedagogical purposes and cultural expression in Buganda, Uganda.

Buganda Kingdom: A kingdom located in central Uganda, with a rich cultural history and traditional art forms.

Colonialism: The practice of establishing political control over another territory and its people to extend one's own power and interests.

Cultural Heritage: The customs, traditions, and artistic expressions that are inherited from past generations and are considered valuable to a community.

Eurocentric Lens: A perspective that interprets African art and culture through European values and standards, often marginalizing indigenous practices.

Pedagogical Purposes: The use of art or other means to teach or educate, often used in the context of traditional art forms.

Traditional African Art: Artistic expressions and practices that are deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of a community, often passed down through generations.

Triangulation: The use of multiple data sources, methods, or researchers to validate findings and increase the reliability of research.

APPENDIX H: SET OF QUESTIONS (1-25).

1.What is the impact of colonialism on traditional African art forms, specifically banana fiber dolls in Buganda, Uganda, and how has it affected their preservation and cultural significance?

2. How has colonialism influenced the use of materials in traditional Ugandan art, specifically banana fiber?

3. What role do cultural institutions play in preserving and promoting traditional Buganda art forms?

4. How has the commercialization of banana fiber dolls affected their cultural significance and traditional value?

5. What are the key challenges facing the preservation of traditional art forms in Buganda, and how can they be addressed?

5. How has the perception of traditional art forms changed among younger generations in Buganda, and what implications does this have for cultural preservation?

6.What are the similarities and differences between traditional banana fiber dolls in Buganda and similar art forms in other African cultures?

7. How has colonialism impacted the transmission of traditional art skills and knowledge from one generation to the next in Buganda?

8. What role can education play in promoting and preserving traditional Buganda art forms, and how can it be integrated into school curricula?

9. How has the use of banana fiber dolls evolved over time, and what factors have contributed to these changes?

10. What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of using modern materials and techniques in traditional banana fiber doll-making?

11. How can the cultural significance of banana fiber dolls be used to promote cultural tourism and economic development in Buganda, and what are the potential challenges and opportunities?

12. How has globalization affected the traditional art forms in Buganda, and what strategies can be employed to mitigate its impact?

13. What role do women play in the preservation and promotion of traditional Buganda art forms, and how can their contributions be recognized and supported?

14. How has the Buganda kingdom's cultural heritage been impacted by colonialism, and what efforts are being made to revive and preserve it?

15. What are the key characteristics of traditional Buganda art forms, and how do they reflect the community's values and beliefs?

16. How has the use of technology, such as digital media and social media, affected the promotion and preservation of traditional Buganda art forms?

17. What are the potential benefits and challenges of collaborating with international artists and organizations to promote traditional Buganda art forms?

18. How can the cultural significance of banana fiber dolls be used to educate people about the importance of preserving cultural heritage?

19. What are the similarities and differences between traditional Buganda art forms and contemporary art forms in Uganda?

20. How has the political and economic context in Uganda affected the preservation and promotion of traditional Buganda art forms?

21. What role can museums and cultural institutions play in promoting and preserving traditional Buganda art forms, and how can they be made more accessible and relevant to local communities?

22. How has the concept of "art" changed in Buganda over time, and what implications does this have for traditional art forms?

23. What are the key themes and motifs in traditional Buganda art, and how do they reflect the community's history and culture?

24. How has the role of traditional artisans changed in Buganda, and what challenges do they face in preserving their craft?

25. What are the potential benefits and challenges of using traditional Buganda art forms as a tool for social change and community development?